

This is UNEVALUATED Information

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[redacted] S.R.

Scientific/PoliticalMedicine and Health in the Soviet Union.

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VII. Infectious diseases and epidemics

1. The Soviet picture is rather better so far as hygienic measures and protection against contagious diseases are concerned. Particular attention is paid to the possibility of diseases arising from the mass movements of the population in the huge tracts of land, and to the very many types of asiatic infectious diseases about which little is known to European doctors. Measures against these diseases are taken at all levels of the health service, and field surgeons are not badly trained in the use of disinfectant and in anti-epidemic precautionary measures. There do not appear to be any serious outbreaks of epidemics, either in the field of contagious disease or acute epidemics. There are a large number of sound working chemical and bacteriological laboratories and the training of the personnel in them is satisfactory. Hygiene measures enforced in the camps, and particularly in the camp and civilian communal kitchens (many civilians are not in the position to run their own kitchens) are of a good standard, and there is quite a well developed bathing cult.

2. Serious asiatic infectious diseases like plagues, cholera and anthrax have practically disappeared from the Russian-Asiatic areas, and cases of typhoid and dysentery are not more frequent than they are in Europe.* Relapsing fever is present to a certain extent in the swamp areas. Malaria, also in the tropical form, is widespread because the battle waged against the malaria carrying insects (anopholes) is not very effective. There do not appear to be any cases of schistosomiasis, bilharzia, or rabies. Brucellosis is widespread, particularly among children. Tularemia occurs only seldom.

3. The war against malaria and brucellosis appears to be quite effective with a preparation called akrichen, which is supplemented with sulfonamide and antibiotics, and compulsory vaccination of the population is enforced. The Russians use a quintuple serum against typhoid, para-typhoid, A.B. dysentery and tetanus, and although this produces a very strong fever reaction during the first 24 hours, it affords ample biological immunity.

* [redacted] only ever seen two cases of anthrax (German "Milzbrand", Russian "Siberian ulcers").

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25X1

- 2 -



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4. Protection against epidemics includes an adequate control of food and water. Because water is only piped in the large towns, and elsewhere is obtained direct from natural sources, a constant control of water intended for drinking and cooking is carried out.

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